

New Models for Environmental Protection Track

New Models for Small Sources Workshop

The Massachusetts Environmental Results Program

The Massachusetts Environmental Results Program (ERP) is an on-going environmental management approach that cost-effectively increases environmental compliance and overall environmental performance through a less burdensome, and more transparent, regulatory system. In this system, facilities are educated about their environmental impact and obligations, are required to certify compliance, and are tracked to evaluate environmental performance. In addition, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) applies a statistical approach to track environmental performance of individual facilities, and whole industry groups and uses the results to target compliance assistance and inspections.

The ERP approach is complemented by the agency's performance of traditional, random compliance inspections as well as strategically targeted inspections. ERP is not a voluntary or leadership program; for those sectors covered by ERP, participation (including self-certification of compliance) is mandatory.

During the initial roll-out phase of ERP, MA DEP focused on sectors that were primarily subject to state, rather than federal, requirements. The decision was based not on a desire to limit ERP to state requirements, but rather, on MA DEP's desire to focus ERP on small business sectors during its initial development and application and to address the large universe of smaller entities subject to state-only requirements.

ERP currently applies to more than 2,000 facilities in three sectors in Massachusetts: dry cleaning, photoprocessing, and printing. MA DEP is in the process of expanding ERP to two additional, cross-sector categories: (1) facilities discharging industrial wastewater (IWW) to sewers and (2) facilities installing new boilers. The state is expanding the program into other sectors and USEPA and MADEP have formed a partnership to investigate the transferability of the ERP approach and its tools to other states.

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Sonoma County Green Business Project

PROBLEM:

In 1992 it was discovered that hazardous waste was entering a sewer system causing an imbalance at one of our water treatment plants. The problem was pinpointed to an area in town called "Auto Row".

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION:

Instead of issuing citations or fines to businesses along the "Auto Row" corridor, some inspectors joined forces and proposed a solution: an educational, not enforcement, program which we called "Sonoma Green Business". This program was designed and implemented by an advisory group consisting of the business community and a pre-existing committee called Sonoma Environmental Quality Assurance Committee (SEQAC).

SEQAC is a group of regulators involved in different environmental programs: air board, water board, public utilities (water treatment plants), hazardous materials, hazardous waste and fire code. This group continues to meet monthly to discuss issues of overlapping concern and to continue to work on the "Green" business program.

The Sonoma Green Business Program recognizes businesses which are in compliance with environmental regulations. The business is issued a certificate of compliance and a logo sticker to display in their front window. The program has only three policies which SEQAC developed, one for certification/recertification, revocation of SGB status, and advertising using the logo.

RESULTS:

This program has grown from one offered only to the auto repair industry to now include wineries and printers. The initial program eliminated the problem of illegal disposal of hazardous materials. Since that time, the program has focused on educating any business volunteering for the program. Our program focuses on regulations and voluntary standards such as pollution prevention, recycling and resource conservation.

The business community appreciates the opportunity to participate in the development process. They also appreciate the information they are presented by our staff. This system has, by default, set up an ombudsperson system because whichever inspector is assigned the "lead" in the SGB certification process becomes that business' primary contact for all environmental questions.

This program has established strong business/government ties. It has opened the lines of communication between us. It has broken down the adversarial barriers which are a part of enforcement/regulatory programs and has promoted very good working relationships between business and government. Additionally, the program has shown an improvement in the "bottom line" for businesses that participate.

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